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"Operation Motivation" was started in 1957 and serves 23 elementary schools with 16,000 children, approximately 95 percent of whom are Negro. Its purpose is to raise academic achievement through motivation rather than altered curricula or instructional techniques.

Approaches undertaken by the program include convincing teachers that higher achievement is possible, persuading parents to rise above past racial discrimination, appealing to the sense of pride of pupils, and appealing to community agencies to join in the campaign.

For the first time, pupils entering high school have reached or exceeded national norms in reading and language and have just missed the national norm in arithmetic by one month.

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CTS BULLETIN

Published from time to time by Community Talent Search (CTS), an interracial activity of the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students (NSSFNS) to raise the educational sights of all our underprivileged students

6 East 82nd Street, New York 28, N. Y. D128 February, 1962

THE BANNEKER PROGRAM IN ST. LOUIS

By SAMUEL SHEPARD, JR.

This issue of the CTS Bulletin continues the reporting of activities in several regions of the country in behalf of underpriviledged students. Included are reports on projects in San Francisco, St. Louis, five more New York State Project ABLE cities, along with other miscellaneous information. The goals of Community Talent Search (CTS) are still to spread "the prairie fire" by the dissemination of authentic information directly from its sources.

The Banneker District is one of five administrative groups into which the St. Louis Public Elementary Schools are divided. It comprises twenty-three elementary schools, with an enrollment of approximately 16,000 children of whom approximately 95 per cent are Negro. The district has 500 teachers, twenty principals, two general consultants, and an administrative director. The children who are served by this district live in the underprivileged sections of the city and their parents fall on the lower rung of the socio-economic ladder.

Everyone concerned within the Banneker District is thoroughly convinced of the following two assumptions:

1. That I.Q. scores as they are currently arrived at are not truly indicative of either the capacity for or the likelihood of academic achievement of culturally deprived pupils.

2. That sufficiently strong and appropriate motivation, rather than drastic alterations in current instructional techniques and curricular offerings, can change academic apathy to energetic school activity leading to achievement.

This conviction underlies our program which might be appropriately called "Operation Motivation" and which was launched at the beginning of the school year, 1957-1958. This program had but one purpose—to raise the academic achievement of the pupils from kindergarten to grade eight in the elementary schools within the Banneker District through motivation—not altered curricula or instructional techniques.

Four simultaneous approaches

To this end, four simultaneous approaches were undertaken:

(1) *Convincing teachers* that higher and more acceptable pupil achievement is possible through serious efforts on the part of all concerned to give children a vision of future

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employment opportunities and the direct relation of these opportunities to present-day school work. Every effort was made to help teachers with middle class values and attitudes to understand that a genuine respect for the inherent worth and dignity of each child is the *sine qua non* to pupil inspiration;

(2) *Persuading parents* to rise above the lethargizing effects of past racial discrimination and look forward to a brighter and better future for their children through education and thus inspire these children by word and deed to regard school as the best means to self-fulfillment and upward mobility;

(3) *Appealing directly to the sense of pride and competitive spirit of the pupils* themselves by showing them concrete proof that academic success is a definite pre-requisite to increased employment opportunities and success in life, by giving them hints and suggestions for improving their study habits, and by encouraging them to greater academic effort through pep rallies, honor assemblies, and other types of extrinsic incentives;

(4) *Appealing to various community agencies* to join in the campaign to help children acquire a taste for and positive attitude toward school work.

Pupils reach or exceed national norms

Our efforts have had some success. For the first time in our District, pupils leaving the eighth grade and entering the high school have reached or exceeded the national norms in the important tool subjects, reading and language, and have just missed the national norm in arithmetic by one month. We are encouraged by these gains and are determined not only to continue our four-pronged program, but to expand our efforts.